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COMMEMORATION OF THE FIFTIETH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS
IN 1995

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-ninth year

Letter dated 10 May 1994 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the address to the United Nations made by the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Boris N. Yeltsin, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 45 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Y. VORONTSOV

* A/49/50/Rev.1.

ANNEX

Address to the United Nations made on 10 May 1994 by the President of the Russian Federation on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War

In 1995 all mankind will commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. The defeat of nazism marked a great victory of the forces of good over the forces of evil. However, the price of victory was high. The war cost the lives of over 50 million human beings. Hundreds of thousands of cities and villages were wiped off the face of the earth. Hundreds of millions of people were left without shelter and sustenance.

There is not one family in Russia that would not have been scorched by the flames of war. Our pain and sorrow, the inconsolable grief of soldiers' widows, will never subside. Both the tragedy of war and the joy of victory will remain in our people's memory forever.

Even time is powerless to diminish the significance of the great victory achieved through the common efforts of the peoples of various nations. One of the major lessons of this victory is that the maintenance of peace calls for united, well-coordinated and vigorous actions on the part of all peace-loving forces. This is particularly important at the present time when the likelihood of armed confrontation between States persists, blood continues to be shed in civil, inter-ethnic and local conflicts, and the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is growing.

Russia believes that it is in mankind's common interests to take active measures to enhance the role and effectiveness of the United Nations, which is the key element of the collective security system; this would be in keeping with the lofty goal of the Charter of the United Nations "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war".

Our people, which bore the brunt of the Second World War and sacrificed tens of thousands of its sons and daughters on the altar of victory, consistently rejects the use of force as a means of settling disputes. We are convinced that there are no ends that can justify the unleashing of wars. The preservation of peace is the highest goal of our State.

The Russian Federation calls upon all States Members of the United Nations and their parliaments and Governments to do everything in their power to put an end to the existing armed conflicts and avert new ones.

In memory of the millions of people who perished in the flames of the Second World War, we propose that the fiftieth anniversary of the victory over nazism should be widely and solemnly observed under the auspices of the United Nations and that 1995 should be proclaimed "World Year of Peoples' Remembrance of the Victims of the Second World War".

May the fiftieth anniversary of that great victory give a new powerful impetus to the maintenance and strengthening of peace. Mankind must end the twentieth century and enter the new millennium with confidence in the future.

B. Yeltsin